

TEACHINGS OF THE SIDHA

PART 2: KARMA



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COVER

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"What you are is what you have been, what you will be is what you do now." - Buddha

"If you want to know your past life, look into your present condition; if you want to know your future life, look at your present actions." - Padmasambhava

"Seeds of past karma cannot germinate if they are roasted in the fires of divine wisdom." - Paramahansa Yogananda

KARMA

Nadi reader T. Ramesh once asked me why the spiritual masters when conducting discourses for the public do not talk about karma.

When one reads the nadi (predictions written by the sidhas for individuals on palm leaves thousands of years ago) for the first time, the sidhas always reveal the past birth and the past karma. The idea in revealing this information is to enable one to perform atonements so as to lessen the effects of karma. Only when the karma is reduced can man approach God. It is an important aspect in the spiritual path.

Tavayogi Thangarasan Adigal of the Sri Agathiyar Gnana Peedham in Kallaru, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu says if there is karma then there is birth. Karma is the cause of birth.

Ramalinga Swami, a recent sidha from Vadalur, in his 'MANUMURAI KANDA VASAGAM' mentions the probabilities for one's rebirth.

“Did I create fear in others?
Did I hurt my loved ones?
Did I summon and tarnish others,
Did I stop others from making donations?
Did I smear my friends?
Did I sabotage friendships?
Did I speak gossip that lead to families being destroyed,
Did I refused to help one in need,
Did I increase taxes and rob others,
Did I make the poor suffer?
Did I act unjustly?
Did I stop the means of income of others?
Did I entice others and cheat them,
Did I rip work but refused to pay accordingly,
Did I adulterate rice with pebbles?

Did I ignore the hungry?
Did I refrain from feeding the poor?
Did I exposed those that had taken refuge with me,
Did I aid those who committed murder?
Did I scout and spy on behalf of thieves,
Did I snatch properties belonging to others and lied to them?
Did I sleep with those who had lost their virginity?
Did I abuse virgins who I had a responsibility to protect?
Did I rape those who already had had a husband?
Did I lock up birds in their cages?
Did I not feed the calves?
Did I build up this body by consuming meat?
Did I poison drinking water?
Did I fell trees that gave us shade?
Did I destroy others out of revenge?
Did I demolish public halls?
Did I not listen to my parents?
Did I not greet my guru?
Did I not give my guru his dues, for his sustenance?
Did I envy the learned?
Did I find mistakes in the writings of the wise?
Did I offend devotees of Siva?
Did I offend the yogis?
Did I prevent the public from conducting their prayers by shutting the doors to the temples?
Did I smear the name of the Lord?
What sin did I do, I do not know", questions the saint.

Birth is a result of past karma. If karma (both good and bad) is erased there is no reason to take birth again. The disciple needs to live his life, distinguishing between the good and bad karma, which takes shape as a result of links with the past births. Confusion too is a result of past karmas and it does not make advancement in spiritual practices possible. The disciple needs to perform tapas and penances to end this circle of birth. He needs to cleanse all karma through prayers. The sidhas give assurance that the disciple's karma shall be cleansed by prayers. The karma shall be burnt away by the very fire of meditation, say the sidhas. "Seeds of past karma cannot germinate if they are roasted in the fires of divine wisdom," says Paramahansa Yogananda.

For one to realize god without any hindrance one has to know ones karma. A lot of importance is given, in the initial stage, to karma by these sidhas.

These karmas are revealed by the sidhas through the nadi readings. The nadi is a comprehensive reading of what you are undergoing currently; what you had done in the past and what to expect in the future with lots of option thrown in. One is required to perform appeasement and atonements (Parikarams) to one's wrong doing to other beings.

Having understood karma and its domino effects we are required to tread carefully so as not to incur more negative karma but instead increase the positive karma. One has to refrain from performing even the positive karma eventually for that would result in being born again to enjoy the fruits of one's action. For one who is spiritually inclined he would have to even forego doing good that results in good karma and having to take birth again in order to reap the benefits of the good done in the past life. So to end this circle of birth would mean having to do nothing. When you do nothing you do not tread on others feet, you do not mess up others life, you do not change things and create happenings, and you do not resist changes. You do not actively participate in the happenings around you but instead you will be just watching.

After a period of meditation and having received gods grace one would if required be asked to go back to a mission to educate and bring more souls into the fold of God. This action by the person who would most probably by now be a re-known saint does not create bad nor good karma for he would be carrying out activities that would not enslave him but instead be for the betterment of the entire public that comes into contact with him. He could then choose to leave on his own will when the time was right.

So knowing what we did in the past (past karma) is of utmost important.

In 'MERGING WITH SIVA – Hinduism's Contemporary Metaphysics', Himalayan Academy, 2005, Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami clearly spells out Karma, its origin, its effects and recommendations to reduce, nay to absolutely rid of Karmas.

'Every action, every effect, in the universe has been preceded by a specific cause or set of causes. That cause is in itself an effect of prior causes. The law of karma is the law of cause and effect, or action and reaction.'

'When we cause a traumatic disruption within ourselves or within others, the action is imprinted in the memory patterns of the muladhara chakra. The

seed has been planted and will remain vibrating in the depths of the mind even though consciously forgotten. We carry it over from life to life, from birth to birth until one day it blossoms into the fruit of our action — reaction. Since we have forgotten our past life and are only left with the pranic reverberations deep in the memory cells, we don't know the causes. In fact, there seems to be no cause for many of the things that happen to us in life, no reason or justification. This can be frustrating. However, that is karma, and it is generally written off by saying, "That's karma." It is an effect to a previous cause'.

Sogyal Rinpoche in his book 'THE TIBETAN BOOK OF LIVING AND DYING', HarperSanFrancisco, 1993, mentions,

'Usually we forget what we do, and it is only long afterward that the results catch up with us. By then we are unable to connect them with their causes. The results of our actions are often delayed, even into future lifetimes; we cannot pin down one cause, because any event can be an extremely complicated mixture of many karmas ripening together'.

Annie Besant and Bhagawan Das in 'SANATANA DHARMA' by the Theosophical Publishing House, 2000 explains.

'Karma literally means action, but as every action is triple in its nature, belonging partly to the past, partly to the present and partly to the future, it has come to mean the sequence of events, the law of causes and effects, the succession in which each effect follows its own cause'.

'What is called the consequence of an action is really not a separate thing but is a part of the action, and cannot be divided from it. Nothing occurs which is not linked to the past and to the future'.

William Hart in the 'ART OF LIVING – Vipassana Meditation', Vipassana Research Institute, 2005 defines karma or kamma.

'All beings own their deeds, inherit their deeds, originate from their deeds, and are tied to their deeds; their deeds are their refuge. As their deeds are base or noble, so will be their lives. We can each become master of our fate by becoming master of our actions.

Each of us has the means to end the suffering in our actions’.

Eknath Easwaran in ‘DIALOGUE WITH DEATH - A Journey through Consciousness’, Jaico Publishing House, 2002, says,

‘Hindu and Buddhist mystics would go so far as to say that we have come into this life expressly to fulfill our unfulfilled desires, which as unconscious drives or samskaras shape everything we do. The slightest thought has consequences, as does the slightest act. Over the years it is the sum of all these consequences, large and small, that shapes our lives. Nothing that he says, thinks, or does is without consequences’.

‘Thoughts are the very source of our karma, for from our thoughts flows everything: words, actions, desires, decisions, and destiny. Karma is not imposed by some cosmic lawgiver outside us’.

Swami Rajarshi Muni in ‘YOGA – The Ultimate Attainment’, Jaico Publishing House, 2004, explains karma.

‘During each earthly existence, a soul creates innumerable karmas in the form of thoughts, words, and actions. These karmas leave behind corresponding subliminal impressions that are carried forward with the subtle body from one life to the next. When these latent impressions become activated at opportune moments in the present life, or in a future life, they awaken into desires, which then amass volitional energy sufficient to lead the soul to perform new karmas. Thus the karmas of the present life lead to the karmas of future lives. They establish a continuous and unending chain of causes and effects’.

Paramahansa Yogananda in ‘AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI’, Self Realization Fellowship, 1990, writes,

‘The effort is part of the karma, as much as the goodness or badness: karma is not a finished thing awaiting us, but a constant becoming, in which the future is not only shaped by the past but is modified by the present’.

Ram Das in ‘PATH TO GOD - Living the Bhagavad Gita’, Harmony Books, 2004, says,

‘Every act we do creates vasanas, life waves, based on the desires connected with the act. Even when we die, they continue; the physical body dies, and what remains are those subtle life waves, those mental tendencies that function like a kind of psychic DNA code to determine your next round’.

Three distinguished categories of karma are revealed by Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami.

‘Ancient yogis, in psychically studying the timeline of cause and effect, assigned three categories to karma.

1. The first is sanchita (samcita), the sum total of past karma yet to be resolved.
2. The second category is prarabdha, that portion of sanchita karma being experienced in the present life.
3. Kriyamana, the third type, is karma you are presently creating’.

Annie Besant and Bhagawan Das in ‘SANATANA DHARMA’ by the Theosophical Publishing House, 2000 categorize karma as samcita, prarabdha and vartamana.

1. Samcita is the accumulated karma of the past, and is partly seen in the character of the man, in his powers, weaknesses and capacities. That which was in the olden time produced in many births. Mans tendencies come from this.
2. Prarabdha is that which is ripe for reaping and which cannot be avoided; it is only exhausted by being experienced. From the midst of the samcitas is selected a portion, and, at the time of the beginning of the body, time energizes this. That, which has begun, is actually bearing fruit.
3. Vartamana is that which is now being created. That karma which is being done. The actual, that which is now being made for the future, or the coming karma.

Prarabdha karma which is actually bearing fruit this moment cannot be changed. You have to endure it. Samcita karma gathered and collected can be reduced, changed or entirely wiped out. Vartamana is in your hands. You can redesign your future.

So how can we work out karma?

Paramahansa Yogananda in 'AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI', Self Realization Fellowship, 1990, conveys his master's (Sri Yukteswar) message to him.

'All human ills arise from some transgression of universal law. The scriptures point out that man must satisfy the laws of nature, while not discrediting the divine omnipotence. By a number of means - by prayer, by will power, by yoga meditation, by consultation with saints, by use of astrological bangles - the adverse effects of past wrongs can be minimized or nullified'.

Henry Wei in the 'GUIDING LIGHT OF LAO TZU', Synergy Books International, reproduces Arthur Waley's translation from the Way and its Power,

'Only he that rids himself forever of desire can see the secret essences. He that has never rid himself of desire can see only the outcomes'.

Ram Das in 'PATH TO GOD - Living the Bhagavad Gita', Harmony Books, 2004, shows a path.

'If we want to get done with it all, its' clear that the first step in the process is to stop creating new waves. We're never going to be finished if we keep making new waves for ourselves everyday. Once we're acting purely out of dharma and not out of any desire, we're no longer making waves. When you've totally surrendered to your dharma, when you're no longer trying for anything, that's your way through'.

Dr Hiroshi Motoyama in 'KARMA AND REINCARNATION', Piatkus, 1992 suggests,

'Dissolving karma through learning detachment - non-action within action i.e. acting out the unfolding of one's day to day life continuously but without attachment to the results of the action'.

Eknath Easwaran in 'DIALOGUE WITH DEATH - A Journey through Consciousness', Jaico Publishing House, 2002, advises,

'If we can learn not to act on a samskara by severing the connection between stimulus and response, that particular chain of karma will no longer have a hold on us. Past and future are both contained in every present moment. Whatever we are today is the result

of what we have thought, spoken, and done in all the present moments before now-just as what we shall be tomorrow is the result of what we think, say, and do today’.

Eknath Easwaran says if one learns to say no to his/her samskaras, the decisions will definitely be different. Every time a samskara prompts us to action make use of this opportunity to manage not to make the mistake of participating; then the chain can be broken. He drives the point that the responsibility for both present and future is squarely in our own hands.

Just as Paramahansa Yogananda advocates prayer, Tavayogi too says that prayers do help. Astrologer and sidha practitioner Dr Krishnan advocates the effectiveness of prayers. Sage Agathiyar in the nadi says prayers definitely help overcome karma.

Tavayogi has reminded me not to oppose happenings but to submit to it. Annie Besant and Bhagawan Das describe this quietude on one’s part as merely choices to let past choices have their way, and to go in accordance with them. He simply chooses to do nothing.

Lao Tzu too has reminded us to go with the flow. From Henry Wei in the ‘GUIDING LIGHT OF LAO TZU’, Synergy Books International,

‘So much emphasis does Lao Tzu lay on the most important doctrine in regard to spiritual cultivation known as Wu Wei or non-action which is in the sense of non-interference, that is to say, non interference with the trend of nature or the flow of Tao’.

Annie Besant and Bhagawan Das in ‘SANATANA DHARMA’ by the Theosophical Publishing House, 2000,

‘A man who knows the law of nature utilizes those whose forces are going his way and neutralize those which oppose’.

‘The laws of nature state conditions under which certain results follow. According to the results desired conditions may be arranged, and, given the conditions, the results will invariably follow. Hence the law of nature does not compel any special action, but only renders all actions possible’.

Sogyal Rinpoche in his book 'THE TIBETAN BOOK OF LIVING AND DYING', HarperSanFrancisco, 1993,

'Karma, then, is not fatalistic or predetermined. Karma means our ability to create and to change. It is creative because we can determine how and why we act. We can change. The future is in our hands, and in the hands of our heart. As everything is impermanent, fluid, and interdependent, how we act and think inevitably change the future'.

To the Tibetans, they accept karma as a natural and just process. Karma inspires them to be responsible in whatever they do says Sogyal Rinpoche.

'We must realize that every moment in our life, every joy and every sorrow, can be traced to some source within us. There is no one "out there" making it all happen. We make it happen or not happen according to the actions we perform, the attitudes we hold and the thoughts we think. Therefore, by gaining conscious control of our thoughts and attitudes by right action, we can control the flow of karma. Karma, then, is our best spiritual teacher. We spiritually learn and grow as our actions return to us to be resolved and dissolved'.

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami in 'MERGING WITH SIVA – Hinduism's Contemporary Metaphysics', Himalayan Academy, 2005, says,

'There are thousands of things vibrating in the muladhara chakra, and from those memory patterns they are going to bounce up into view one after another, especially if we gain more prana by breathing and eating correctly. When meditation begins, more karma is released from the first chakra (muladhara chakra). Our individual karma is intensified as the ingrained memory patterns that were established long ago accumulate and are faced, one after another, after another, after another. In our first four or five years of striving on the path we face the karmic patterns that we would never have faced in this life had we not consciously sought enlightenment. Experiences come faster, closer together. So much happens in the short span of a few months or even a few days, catalyzed by the new energies released in meditation and by our efforts to purify mind and body,

it might have taken us two or three lifetimes to face them all. They would not have come up before then, because nothing would have stimulated them’.

‘Carry your karma cheerfully’ says Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami. The swami metes out three ways that one can handle karma. The first approach,

‘Then begin the tedious task of unwinding these multitudinous patterns through performing daily sadhana. Each next step will become quite obvious to you as you begin to find that you are the writer of your own destiny, the master of your ship through life, and the freedom of your soul is but yours to claim through your accomplishments of your yoga’.

‘The second way to face karma is in deep sleep and meditation. Seeds of karma that have not even expressed themselves can be traced in deep meditation by one who has many years of experience in the within. Having pinpointed the unmanifested karmic seed, the jnani can either dissolve it in intense light or inwardly live through the reaction of his past action’.

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami continues,

‘If his meditation is successful, he will be able to throw out the vibrating experiences or desires which are consuming the mind. In doing this, in traveling past the world of desire, he breaks the wheel of karma which binds him to the specific reaction which must follow every action. That experience will never have to happen on the physical plane, for its vibrating power has already been absorbed in his nerve system’.

‘A third way that past actions is reenacted is through the actual intense reactionary experience and working with you, conquering inner desires and emotions. When something happens to you that you put into motion in a past life or earlier in this life, sit down and think it over. Do not strike out. Do not react. Work it out inside yourself. Take the experience within, into the pure energies of the spine and transmute that energy back into its primal source. In doing so, what happens? You change its consistency. It no longer has magnetic power, and awareness flows away from that memory pattern forever.

‘You could remember the experience, but your perspective would be totally detached and objective. This is the most common way karma is resolved, in day-to-day experiences. The full force of the karmic experience comes, but because of his present goodness and previous blessings earned through control of his intellect, he receives the experience as a minor wound. This seed karma is worked through within himself in this way’.

This is what saints have been doing. When Pattinathar was accused of stealing jewellery belonging to a temple, the local king had him tied to a post and whipped him. The saint took in on him without protest. He accepted it as gods will. When Yogi Ramsuratkumar was set upon by mischief makers and beaten up, he accepted it as god’s will. Similarly when thieves broke into Bhagawan Ramana Maharishi’s ashram and beat him up he received the blows without defending himself.

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami adds,

‘Planetary changes activate new karmas and close off some of the karmas previously activated. The magnetic pulls and the lack of magnetism are what jyotisha (Vedic astrology) is telling us is happening at every point in time. These karmas then wait in abeyance, accumulating new energy from current actions, to be reactivated at some later time. These karmic packets become more refined, life after life, through sadhana. All of this is summed up by one word, evolution. The sum total of all karmas, including the journey through consciousness required to resolve them, is called samsara’.

One needs to evolve. That is the reason we are born again and again. We come here to gain experience, know the right from the wrong, bring about changes in ourselves, family and friends and the world around us.

Betty J. Eadie who had a near-death experience, in her book ‘EMBRACED BY THE LIGHT’ says all experiences she has had was to bring her to higher levels of knowledge.

‘All of my experiences now took on a new meaning. I realized that no real mistakes had been made in my life. Each experience was a tool for me to grow by. I even saw that many of my experiences had been orchestrated by guardian angels’.

This is what Agathiyar tells me too in the nadi.

Lama Surya Das in 'AWAKENING THE BUDDHA WITHIN – Tibetan Wisdom for the Western World', Bantam Books, 1997, says,

'Every moment we are presented with the possibility of changing the future. He adds by thorough understanding of karmic causation and skillful means we can become free. We change, and our future changes too. This is the truth. This is karma. We are responsible; the lever of our destiny remains in our hands'.

Annie Besant and Bhagawan Das in 'SANATANA DHARMA' by the Theosophical Publishing House, 2000 explains further.

'The main thing to see in karma is not a destiny imposed from without, but a self-made destiny, imposed from within, and therefore a destiny that is continually being remade by its maker'.

Dr Hiroshi Motoyama in 'KARMA AND REINCARNATION', Piatkus, 1992 examines karma.

'Karma is basically a result of the spiritual ignorance of the self that mistakenly believes it is an independent entity. As long as the self functions in this state of ignorance it is imprisoned in a continuous process of death and reincarnation within the dimensions of reality that are governed by the law of cause and effect'.

Paramahansa Yogananda in the 'BHAGAVAD GITA', Yogada Satsanga Society of India, 2002 says man has the divine gift of free choice, which he can use properly or improperly, to his benefit or harm.

'Animals, not subject to individual karma, are under the sway of group or mass karma. An animal's life is predestined; man's is not'.

We are told prayer and devotion helps expel karma. How does devotion help remove karma? Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami says,

'Bhakti brings grace, and the sustaining grace melts and blends the karmas in the heart. In the heart chakra the karmas are in a molten state. The throat chakra molds the karmas through sadhana, regular

religious practices. The third-eye chakra sees the karmas, past, present and future, as a singular oneness. And the crown chakra absorbs, burns clean, enough of the karmas to open the gate, the door of Brahman, revealing the straight path to merging with Siva'.

Many of the present day saints have extolled the efficacy of songs of saints of days bygone that arose out of extreme devotion. The Tiruarutpa of Ramalingam, the Tirumanthiram of Tirumoolar, the Thevaram of the 63 Nayanmar, the Tirupugazh of Arunagiri, the numerous songs by the Sidhas all have help bring about the right mood whereby even the toughest heart is mellowed down. Only when the heart melts then one can see through this veil of Maya or ignorance. Ramalingam mentions seven veils that need to be removed before one enters that state of realization; seeing the Lord in oneself and other beings too.

Annie Besant and Bhagawan Das in 'SANATANA DHARMA' by the Theosophical Publishing House, 2000 show us a way out of this predicament.

'A man may escape from the wheel of births and deaths, and yet remain manifested so long as Eswara chooses to manifest, by ceasing to create karma and by exhausting what already exists. When all desires hidden in the heart are loosed, then the mortal becomes immortal, then he enjoys Brahman'.

'Whose works are all free from the molding of desire, whose karma is burned up in the fire of wisdom, him the wise have called a sage. Then freedom is achieved, and the man may either remain, as the rishis have remained, to aid in the evolution going on in the Brahmananda or may sink to rest'.

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami,

'We bring just a certain portion of our karmas to live through in this life, called prarabdha karmas. Karmas left to be worked out in another life are in seed stage, inactive. So, here we are, with our two suitcases of karma, and the idea is to go through life and come out the other end without the suitcases. Unless we have dharma, which we are committed to and live fully, which has the restraints, we would fill up the suitcases again'.

Paramahansa Yogananda in the 'BHAGAVAD GITA',
Yogada Satsanga Society of India, 2002, adds,

'After trials and tribulations a man wants to become better; god, ever aware through his intelligent cosmic vibratory omnipresence, then sends the seeker a guru - a divine saint, or the teaching of such a one, thus trying to bring the devotee back to his divine kingdom'.

The night Buddha attained enlightenment; he went through several stages of awakening. One of it was where he had the recollection of his previous lives. Sogyal Rinpoche in his book 'THE TIBETAN BOOK OF LIVING AND DYING', HarperSanFrancisco, 1993, quotes Buddha's the Middle Length Sayings originally quoted in H.W.Schumann's The Historical Buddha, London, Arkana, 1989,

'I remembered many, many former existences I had passed through: (he mentions a hundred thousand - Ed) in various world-periods. I knew everything about these various births: where they had taken place, what my name had been, which family I had been born into, and what I had done. I lived through again the good and bad fortune of each life and my death in each life, and came to life again and again. In this way I recalled innumerable previous existences with their exact characteristic features and circumstances. This knowledge I gained in the first watch of the night'.

In the second watch of the night, he gained knowledge of karma.

'With the heavenly eye, purified and beyond the range of human vision, I saw how beings vanish and come to be again. I saw high and low, brilliant and insignificant, and how each obtained according to his karma a favorable or painful rebirth'.

Tavayogi tells me he had seen his past through meditation. This birth is a result of his past actions. For those who are not into meditation the past can be known by reading his/her nadi.

Ram Das in 'PATH TO GOD - LIVING THE BHAGAVAD GITA', Harmony Books, 2004, compares himself to his guru,

'Since I could only see the stage that I was in at the moment, I always caught up in reaching for this or

grabbing for that or pushing away the other thing. But Maharajji could see the whole pattern evolving. When you're at that stage, you see in advance the direction the karmic waves are taking, and you know exactly why it's all happening the way it is'.

The need to look towards spiritualism and a guru is explained too by Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami.

'After the realization of the Self, Parasiva, the forces of dharma and previous karma still exist, but through the force of the realization of God, much of the impending impact of karma has dwindled, and it is faced differently, treated differently. Prior to the experience of realization, karmas were dealt with in individual increments. After realization, the sum total is seen. The spiritual destiny is realized'.

'Karma is transferable. One can take on some of the karma of other people, work it out for them and make their burden a little easier for them. The guru guides and also shares a bit of the heavier burdens, if one is fortunate enough to be dedicated enough to have a guru who will lend his powers in this way. But each aspect of the karma, the outgrowth of the dharma, must be passed through by the disciple, creating as little as possible of a similar karma on this tenuous path of the repetition of the cycles of life'.

'The guru may take unto himself, into his nerve system, some of the heavier areas of your karma in the same way your parents performed this function for you perhaps unknowingly'.

Paramahansa Yogananda in 'AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI', Self Realization Fellowship, 1990, adds,

'By putting on the ailments of others, a yogi can satisfy, for them, the karmic law law of cause and effect; its workings may be scientifically manipulated by men of divine wisdom. Only great gurus are able to assume the karma of disciples'.

Agathiyar has taken on the karma of his devotees in the past. Similarly we have read of Gurus taking on the karma of their disciples. Paramahansa Yogananda struck the shoulder of a chela with a burning brand only to free him from painful death; thus satisfying the karmic law through slight suffering by fire. Help a hungry man by feeding him and you have

brought relief to him. The karma of his (the one in hunger) is exhausted that very moment. You had then been a tool or agent of karma.

Annie Besant and Bhagawan Das in 'SANATANA DHARMA' by the Theosophical Publishing House, 2000 state an exception to this where the saint sees into the seekers.

'Only a full and clear knowledge of the causes in the past resulting in the suffering of the present could justify refusal to help on karmic grounds'.

Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami writes further,

'One does not have the experience of realizing the Self until all of his karma is in a state of resolve. When this begins to occur in him, he actually sees that man is not man, man is the Self, God, for his karma and the forces of his dharma have begun to become transparent to him'.

'Through the power of his realization, the karma is created and simultaneously dissolved. This occurs for the one who lives in the timeless state of consciousness. If one were to realize the Self each day, he would live his life like writing his karma on the surface of water'.

'The swamis who renounce the world and do tapas are trying to burn the seeds of the karmas that they did not bring with them in this life. They set fire to the whole house. They renounce the world and put restrictions upon themselves that others don't'.

Paramahansa Yogananda says,

'In Nirbikalpa Samadhi the yogi dissolves the last vestiges of his material or earthly karma. Nevertheless, he may still have certain astral and causal karma to work out, and therefore takes astral and then causal embodiments on high vibrational spheres'.

What happens when all the karma of all past lives is worked out? Satguru Sivaya Subramuniyaswami reveals the answer.

'You would truly be an artisan, an absolute expert at working out karma in the mental and spiritual spheres, and could begin to help working out karma for other people'.

Paramahansa Yogananda in 'AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOGI', Self Realization Fellowship, 1990, mentions,

'Such voluntary returns are called vyutthana or reversion to earthly life after Maya has ceased to blind'.

'When the yogi has reached his infinite goal, all his actions, miraculous or otherwise, are then performed without karmic involvement. The iron filings of karma are attracted only where a magnet of the personal ego still exists. Their incarnations on this planet are not subject to the rigid restrictions of karma'.

'Sri Yukteswar himself was serving on an illumined astral planet called Hiranyaloka as a savior to help men work out their physical karma. He aids advanced beings to rid themselves of astral karma and thus attain liberation from astral births. Even as in his earthly incarnation he had occasionally assumed the weight of disease to lighten his disciple's karma, so in the astral world his mission as a savior enabled him to take on certain astral karma of dwellers on Hiranyaloka, and thus hasten their evolution into the higher causal world'.

And there are the sidhas, rishis and munis that we have heard of who are on the look out for potential aspirants on this path to realization and help them achieve realization just as they have attained.

We end this article with a quote from Paramahansa Yogananda:

"Knowledge of the law of karma encourages the earnest seeker to find the way of final escape from its bonds"